IN THE SPECIFICATION:

Please replace the paragraph bridging pages 9 and 10 with the following paragraph (shown with marked-up changes):

The tube sockets 11 at each end of the light assembly 1 are mounted on a respective socket mounting plate 80 that extends in a widthwise direction. The socket mounting plates 80 are attached to respective lengthwise ends of a ballast channel assembly 50 that has a lengthwise dimension located along the center longitudinal axis of the lighting fixture 1. The ballast channel assembly 50 receives electrical conductors such as wires (not shown) from the sockets 11 for connection to wires or terminals of one or more ballasts 55 mounted to an interior wall of the ballast channel assembly 50. The ballast 55 receives an AC line voltage. For example, in the U.S., ballast line voltage options include 120, 208, 240, 277 or 480 volts, whereas in Canada, ballast options include 120, 277 and 347 volts. The ballast 55 preferably has a circuit arrangement for the operation of a number (e.g., two) of fluorescent tubes, the circuit including an alternating current supply, with a reactance coil and a glow discharge igniter, simply referred to as starter, being required for striking the gas discharge. The reactance coil and the starter may be replaced by using an electronic ballast (elektronisches Vorschaltgerat) ("EVG") for an energy-saving operation that has a high efficiency. Many different types of ballast may be substituted depending on, for example, weight, heating, cost considerations, type of tubes, etc. Electrical connections from the ballast 55 to the individual sockets XX may be accomplished by using well-known ~~wire nuts~~ twist-on wire connectors (not shown) or similar connection devices, or by wires that run directly from individual sockets 11 to push-type terminals located in a terminal strip portion of the ballast 55. Suitable ~~wire nuts~~ twist-on wire connectors, for example, are a model 773-104 available from Wago, and a suitable ballast for powering a pair of T5 tubes is a model ICN-2S54-90C available from Advance. The wires from the ballast 55 may alternatively be provided as a harness type assembly having a connector that plugs into a corresponding connector on the ballast 55 itself. Such a harness may also be used when connecting to a ballast having wires instead of terminals, so that the ballast may be replaced without a need to rewire the lighting fixture 1.